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April 4, 2012

Chair Ravel and Commissioners Eskovitz,
Garrett, Montgomery, and Rotunda
Fair Political Practices Commission
428 J Street, Suite 600
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item 17: AB 2239 (Norby)—Political Reform Act of 1974—OPPOSE

Dear Chair Ravel and Commissioners,

On behalf of California Common Cause and our 400,000 national members, we strongly urge you to oppose Assembly Bill 2239, which proposes to remove campaign contribution limits.

AB 2239 proposes amending the Political Reform Act of 1974 to no longer include voter-approved campaign contribution limits that affect how much a candidate for an elected office can receive and how much a committee can contribute. Also under AB 2239, candidates and committees would no longer be required to file specified campaign reports.

Eliminating campaign contribution limits would go directly against the will of California voters and is a dangerous proposal for democracy, and does not further the purposes of the Act. If AB 2239 is enacted, money will pour into candidate committees at greater amounts than we have ever seen in this state. Elected officeholders may be swayed to vote on behalf of those who make large contributions not on the merits of public policy. Contrary to the author's claims, removing contribution limits to candidates will *not* eliminate the activities of independent expenditures. We strongly disagree with the claim that you can solve the IE problem by replacing it with another problem. We agree with the staff analysis that the increased disclosure requirements are well-intended, but attaching it to the removal of contribution limits is unacceptable. We strongly urge the Commission to either oppose or take an "oppose unless amended" position and ask the author to strike the portion of the bill that eliminates contribution limits.

For these reasons, Common Cause opposes AB 2239 Please contact me at pung@commoncause.org or (916) 520-4070 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Phillip Ung
Policy Advocate

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